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Transforming Education in Post-Normal Times: Our Journey in the iTAC 2023 Competition

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In the fast-paced world of education, adapting to the challenges brought about by post-normal times requires innovative ideas and creative solutions. As a team passionate about revolutionizing the learning experience, we participated in the 2nd International Teaching Aid Competition 2023 (iTAC 2023) organized by the Special Interest Group- Public Interest Centre of Excellence of Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah on 22 June 2023. Under the theme of "Reconnoitering Innovative Ideas in Post-normal Times," our team showcased two exceptional products: Let's Speak and Interdisciplinary Ink. These endeavors aimed to address the pressing needs of students and teachers alike, transforming education for a better future.

Let's Speak: Empowering Students in Challenging Times

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about unprecedented disruptions to traditional classroom settings. Recognizing the obstacles faced by students in Sarawak, Malaysia, due to limited internet access and unfavorable weather conditions, we developed Let's Speak. This virtual tutoring kit was designed to create an engaging and accessible learning environment, regardless of geographical location or internet connectivity. Let's Speak originally targeted improving speaking skills for Integrated Language Skills 1 (ELC121). However, it quickly evolved into a versatile virtual tutoring kit for blended learning. By incorporating interactive and engaging tools, Let's Speak aimed to captivate students and foster their speaking abilities. Additionally, the user-friendly interface and abundant resources promoted self-directed learning, empowering students to take control of their education. The feedback received during the pilot test was overwhelmingly positive, with students acknowledging Let's Speak as a practical and valuable tool for language learning.

Interdisciplinary Ink: Unleashing the Power of Collaboration

Argumentative writing is a crucial skill in academia and beyond. Recognizing its significance, our team implemented an innovative teaching approach called Interdisciplinary Ink. Centered around collaboration and interdisciplinary engagement, this initiative transcended traditional classroom boundaries. Through a webinar format, we invited an expert in argumentative writing to deliver an engaging presentation, facilitate interactive discussions, and provide valuable insights to students from diverse disciplines. This virtual learning environment enabled students to gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter by sharing real-world examples and experiences. Group discussions, collaborative assignments, and peer-to-peer feedback encouraged active participation and engagement, allowing students to apply the concepts learned in a supportive and interactive setting. The interdisciplinary collaboration fostered the exchange of ideas and knowledge among students from different disciplines, enhancing their critical thinking and creativity. Exposure to diverse perspectives nurtured a multidisciplinary approach to problem-solving, preparing students for real-world challenges. Moreover, the opportunity to interact with experts in the field provided valuable guidance and enriched the overall learning experience.

Achievements and Impact

Our team's participation in the iTAC 2023 competition yielded remarkable achievements. Let's Speak emerged as the gold medal winner, while Interdisciplinary Ink secured the bronze. These accolades not only recognized our team's dedication and efforts but also highlighted the significant impact of our innovations on education. The success of Let's Speak demonstrated its potential for commercialization as an e-speaking textbook, revolutionizing language education not only in Malaysia but also in regions facing similar challenges. By leveraging technology to overcome limitations, Let's Speak paved the way for an accessible and engaging learning platform, empowering students in post-normal times. Interdisciplinary Ink, on the other hand, showcased the transformative power of collaboration and interdisciplinary approaches to argumentative writing instruction. The success of this initiative indicated its potential to shape future pedagogical practices and inspire the development of innovative teaching strategies.

Participating in the iTAC 2023 competition allowed our team to showcase our passion for transforming education in post-normal times. Let's Speak and Interdisciplinary Ink are testaments to our commitment to creating a better future for generations to come. As we continue on this journey, we remain dedicated to revolutionizing the learning experience, promoting accessibility, and fostering creativity and critical thinking. With the recognition and achievements gained from iTAC 2023, we are motivated to further refine our innovations and contribute to the advancement of education on a global scale.

